

MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING
Grafton Town Hall Upstairs In Person/Live
With accommodation for persons unable to attend in person via interactive Zoom

Monday, March 4, 2024, 6 pm

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

Selectboard: Chair Joe Pollio, Vice Chair Cathy Siano-Goodwin, John Gregory, Rich Thompson, and Seth Pajcic.

Also: Sam Battaglino, Dottie Cannon, Patrick Cooperman, Bill Kearns, Liisa Kissel, and Colby Record.

Present online: Hardy Merrill and Charlie Bonin.

1. Call to order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Adopt Agenda: It was moved by Seth Pajcic, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve Minutes of the February 20, 2024, meeting: It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by Seth Pajcic, to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2024 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Legislature Update: Seth Pajcic outlined the two letters he would like the board to approve and send to Grafton's legislators with regard to upcoming legislation that include removing aesthetics requirements for energy generation (S. 236), expanding the river corridor (S. 213) and expanding Act 250 (H. 687), the latter of which would affect 90% of the state (rural areas) and not urban areas such as Chittenden County. Pajcic said that VLCT had also alerted towns of a bill that is now in committee that discusses creating new statewide ethics standards and duties for municipal officials, "preempting local authority for thousands of elected and appointed municipal officials," according to VLCT's website. Pajcic said that the letters asked Grafton's representatives to vote no on these upcoming bills.

Liisa Kissel said that Grafton's representative, Heather Chase, will visit Grafton in April and would like to meet with constituents. The date of the meeting will appear in April's *Grafton News*.

It was moved by Seth Pajcic, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, that the board sign and send the proposed letters to Grafton's representatives. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Bond Walker Bridge Update: Joe Pollio said Town Treasurer Kim Record had a couple of changes to this and had been in touch with the bonding agencies. She will update the board at the next meeting.

6. Highway Report:

• Award 2025 Tandem Axle Truck. Road Foreman Colby Record recommended that the award go to ATG, the only bid received, he noted. He said that Morgan Wilbur said they had made changes to the warranty and John Gregory said it looked OK.

It was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Seth Pajcic, to accept the bid of \$197,783 from ATG for the 2025 Tandem Axle Truck. Motion passed unanimously.

• Bell Road Culvert – Request for Proposals. Bill Kearns said that as far as he was concerned, with regard to FEMA funding the culvert replacement, if it's a required replacement, the town has a statement from Scott Jensen that says it has to be replaced. Kearns said that for some reason, FEMA was to make it complicated. Kearns said he thought it should be put out to bid. Joe Pollio said that it had been put out to bid last year and had received only one bid but delayed the project because there had been a question about whether or not FEMA would fund it. After further discussion, it was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to put the project out to bid. Motion passed unanimously.

• Other. Record said to bear with the road crew until the end of the week with the mud. The next day the crew planned to haul in more material and get some stock piled up. As soon as anything freezes or dries out, roads can be repaired. Seth Pajcic asked Record to explain why the crew can't take trucks over the roads now; Record explained that the loaded trucks would create more ruts while making repairs, which would necessitate more repairs. Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked about getting gravel at this time and Record said all towns were in the same boat.

Seth Pajcic said he'd received an email last week saying that there was going to be approximately \$100 million of FEMA mitigation funding available, including structural buyouts, flood plain restoration, etc. Pre-applications are due by June 2024. Bill Kearns talked about his recommendations for mitigation, including culverts 10, 13 (Fisher Hill Road) and then 24 (Hinkley Brook Road).

7. Committee Reports:

Cemetery Committee: Joe Pollio said that Springfield Fence would provide a price on the Middletown Cemetery fence. John Gregory asked who plows Burgess Cemetery Road and Colby Record said that the town did, up to a particular point in the road. Gregory asked if it could be plowed just past the cemetery entrance so that the public could visit it.

8. Other Business: There was no discussion.

9. Public Comment: Sam Battaglino asked if there would be discussion about the Airbnb situation in town; Joe Pollio said the board had some proposals to discuss and would do so at the meetings following Town Meeting.

Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked if a "One-Way" sign could be posted to alert drivers that School Street is one way only. After discussion, Colby Record said he would look at the signs already in place and see if more were needed, or if the existing signs needed to be moved. Siano-Goodwin said this had come up at a school board meeting.

John Gregory told Record that a 40 mph speed sign had been knocked over by the Grafton Village Cheese Company; Record will take a look and reinstall it.

Bill Kearns told the board there was a discrepancy in the speed zone on Route 121 approaching Cambridgeport. One lane has a posted 30 mph and the one going in the other direction has 40 mph. Record said he would check with Morgan Wilbur to see how this could be rectified without revisiting the traffic ordinance.

10. Next regular meeting: Monday, March 18, 2024, at 6 pm.

11. At 6:40 pm, it was moved by Seth Pajcic, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to go into Executive Session to discuss "evaluation of employees" per 1 VSA § 313 (3). Motion passed unanimously.

At 7:22 p.m., it was moved by Seth Pajcic, seconded by Joe Pollio to exit Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Seth Pajcic, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin to appoint David Rogers as the Assistant Foreman at a rate of pay of \$29.00 per hour, effective immediately. There will be a probationary period of 3 months. At the end of the 3 months, if Rogers no longer remains Assistant Foreman, he may go back to his former role at this former rate of pay. Motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Seth Pajcic, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Martin